CHAPTER 218:

SANTA'S GRUDGE

ONE MORNING, IN DECEM-BER

ROKUDO-KUUN, HEELP
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SANTA?
THAT'S ...
HUH?

I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING
WELL ...
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ガリガリ
HE'S GLARING WITH A FACE THAT LOOKS LIKE AN OGRE'S.
WHY'RE YOU STILL...
I SEE.
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ガリ
WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING, ALL OF A SUDDEN...

INCIDENTALLY, HE CANNOT BE SEEN BY ORDINARY PEOPLE
EH–? ARE YOU OKAY, ANNETTE-SENSEI?
ガリガリ
AND, GOSH, MY HEAD HURTS–

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I DON'T GET YOU, BUT...
AH– MY HEAD HURTS
ガリガリ
AT THE END OF THE YEAR I'LL HAVE SOME EXPENSES TO PAY
ガリ
NEXT YEAR?
I'LL GIVE YOU THE REWARD NEXT YEAR, SO...
PLEASE DO SOMETHING, ROKUDO-KUN.

NEXT YEAR'S REWARD WILL BE CARRYING INTEREST. YOU DON'T HAVE ANY OBJECTIONS, RIGHT?
I FEEL THAT THIS SPIRIT'S FEELINGS OF MALICE ARE SO STRONG THAT IT'LL BE DANGEROUS IF WE IGNORE HIM

IT SEEMS LIKE NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO MAKE AN UNPLEASANT FACE WHILE BROODING OVER THAT, YOU KNOW?
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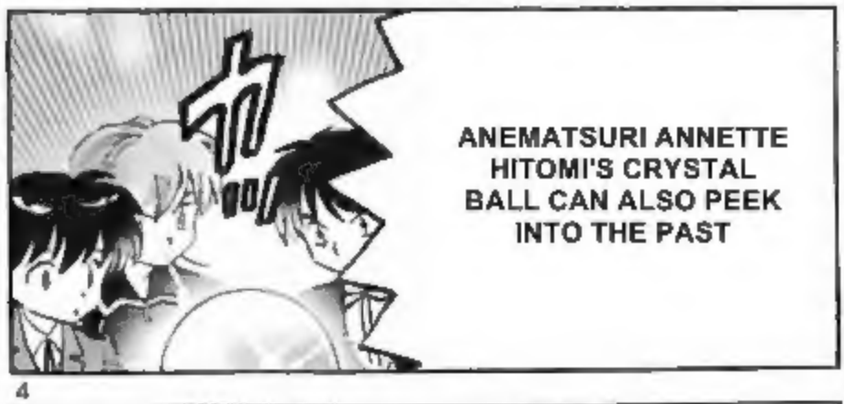
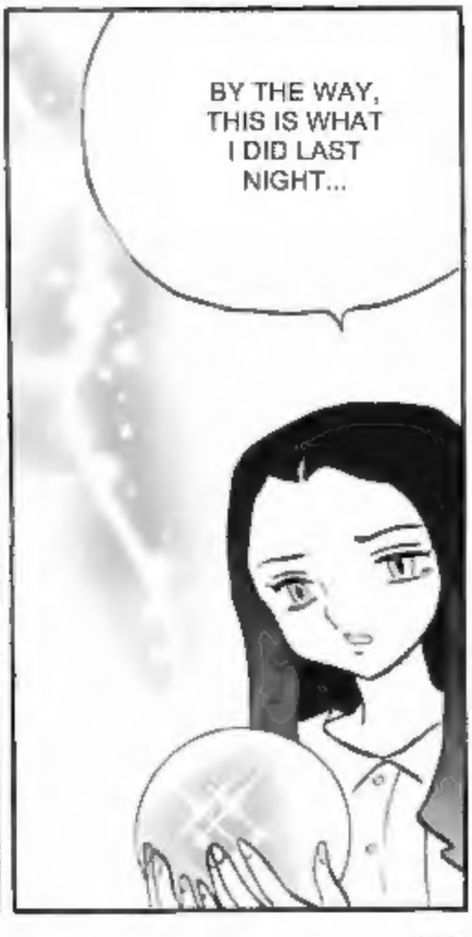
INTEREST ...?


ANEMATSURI ANNETTE HITOMI'S CRYSTAL BALL CAN ALSO PEEK INTO THE PAST


BY THE WAY, THIS IS WHAT I DID LAST NIGHT...

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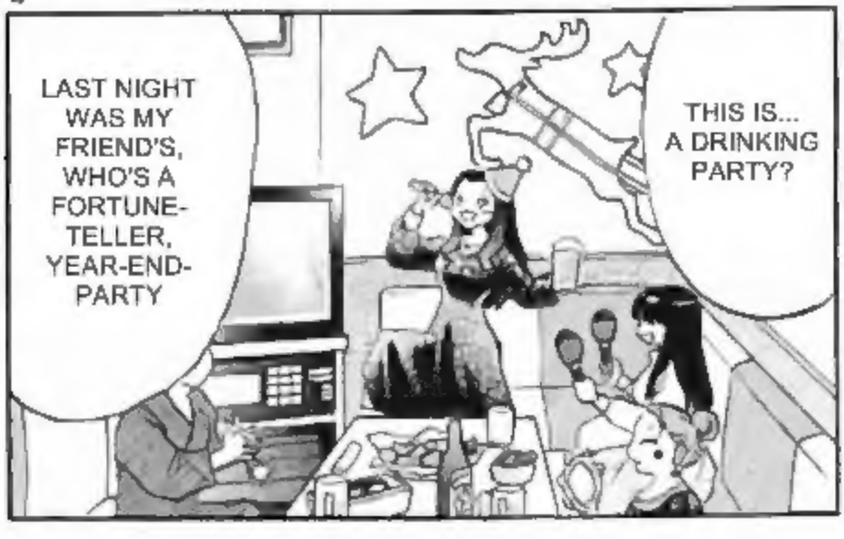
LAST NIGHT WAS MY FRIEND'S, WHO'S A FORTUNE-TELLER, YEAR-END-PARTY
THIS IS... A DRINKING PARTY?

YOU ...
AH, YOU'RE BEING SCOLDED BY SANTA!!
2ème Sale
AH,
YOU'RE SPLASHING A SANTA DECORATION WITH WATER!
YOUR HEAD HURTS BECAUSE YOU HAVE A HANGOVER
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WHICH SANTA HAS A GRUDGE AGAINST YOU?
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ガリ
I HAVE NO MEMORY OF IT...
SPIRIT POWDER IS A TRACKING TOOL, WHICH IF IT'S SPRINKLED ON A DISEMBODIED SPIRIT OR A LIVING SPIRIT IT WILL LOCATE ITS ORIGIN.
ぱっ
SPIRIT POWDER

ANEMA-TSURI ANNETTE HITOMI'S HOUSE
WOOW, IT'S IN JAPANESE STYLE
MY HOUSE ...?
THIS IS...
MY FAMILY WENT TO THE HOT SPRINGS, SO THEY'RE NOT HOME
IT'S FINE.
IT'S A MESS

EEH ~~~ !?
THIS IS THE SOURCE OF MALICE...
A DOLL OF SANTA...

ANEMATSURI ANNETTE HITOMI'S GRANDMOTHER IS FRENCH
THIS IS SOME-THING MY GRANDMOTHER BROUGHT FROM FRANCE
TEACHER, THIS...

THE MIKE FOR DOLLS IS A SHINIGAMI TOOL, WHICH LETS ONE H EAR THE VOICE OF A DOLL.
A MIKE FOR DOLLS

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS ...
NOW,

A GHOST ATTACK!?
UGH, WHAT'S WITH THIS NOISE...?

8

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THE TSUKUMOGAMI SEAL IS AN ITEM THAT GIVES LIFE TO AN ARTICLE AND LETS IT SPEAK
IN THAT CASE, TSUKUMOGAMI SEAL!

STEP ASIDE, ROKUDOI
WHAT AN UNRELI-ABLE GUY,
THERE'S A BARRIER AROUND THE DOLL!?
I'LL POUR SOME HOLY WATER ON THE SACRED SWORD,
GRANT ME THY POWER, PRY OPEN THE GATES OF SILENCE
HOLY SPIRITS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH
AAH

IT'S FUTILE

ガガガラガラ
ピシャーン!

AND MY GRAND-MOTHER IS...
I ALREADY SAID IT, THAT SANTA DOLL BELONGS TO MY GRAND-MOTHER

NOVICES LIKE US DON'T STAND A CHANCE...
I GET IT

SO THE DOLL IS PROTECTED BY THE MAGICAL POWER OF A POWERFUL WITCH
MENTAL IMAGE
A DESCEN-DANT OF THE WITCH ...
SPELL

IS SOME-THING ONLY ANNETTE-SENSEI CAN ...
THEN, AS I THOUGHT, THIS...

TEACHER IS A DESCEN-DANT OF THE WITCH SO
IT'S NOT "EH--"
ボソボソ
EH ~~ ?

THIS WILL BE SOLVED IF YOU'D REMEMBER WHY THIS DOLL IS BEARING A GRUDGE AGAINST YOU!

HOW-EVER
I'VE TRIED MANY TIMES!

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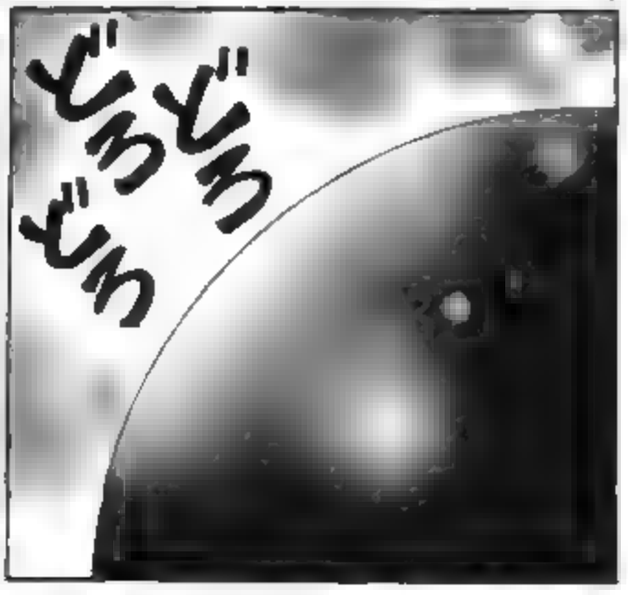
DARK NESS!?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THE VIS ON
AH,
I've
THIS IS
ガーン
THIS S A TAXI SN'T IT?!
IT'S YOU
WHO!?
12
DARK NESS AGAIN
どろどろ
AH
YOU GOT OFF

AFTER THAT, SOMETHING TERRIBLE..
SOMETHING TERRIBLE!?
13
I WASN'T PLANNING TO RIDE A TAXI
IT'S TERRIBLE INDEED

GRANNY~
MOM~
MONEY~
ガラッ
I MADE THE TAXI WAIT AND RAN INTO THE HOUSE TO TAKE SOME MONEY

THE HOUSE IN WHICH THE LIGHT WAS TURNED OFF
THEN THE DARKNESS THAT THE CRYSTAL BALL SHOWED US IS PROBABLY

OW!
BUT THE TWO OF THEM WENT ON A TRIP TO THE HOT SPRINGS SO THEY WEREN'T THERE

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MY GRANDMOTHER HID THE PENSION IN SANTA'S POUCH WHILE CHANTING A SPELL
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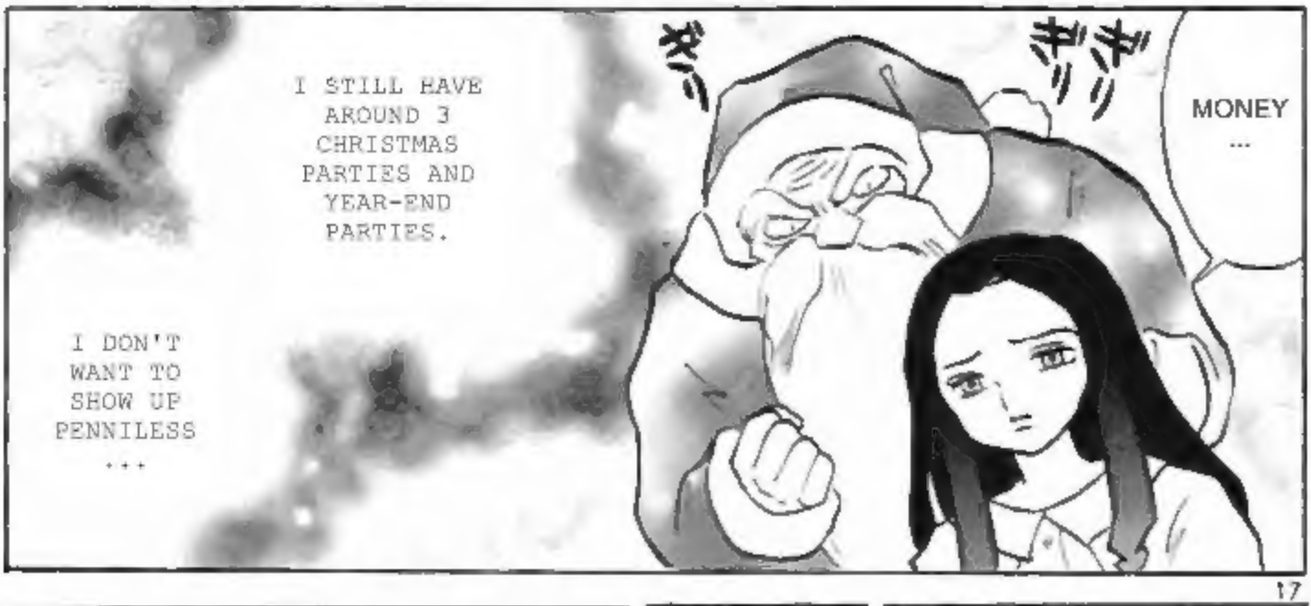
守リナサーナ

THEN I REMEMBERED.

BUT...
YOU TOOK THE MONEY?
I'M JUST GOING TO BORROW THEM!
WASN'T THE DOLL PROTECTED BY YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S MAGICAL POWER?
15
AS I THOUGHT ... YOU'RE BEING REJECTED BY THE BARRIER

THIS... IS SOMETHING TO BE RESENTED FOR.
YOU WON ...
10
SANTA LOOKS EXTREMELY ANGRY TOO
I WAS VERY DES-PERATE TOO~

IT MEANS THAT IF YOU RETURN THE MONEY TO SANTA'S POUCH THE HATRED WILL BE GONE, RIGHT?
THAT'S GREAT, ANNETTE-SENSEI.


I STILL HAVE AROUND 3 CHRISTMAS PARTIES AND YEAR-END PARTIES.
I DON'T WANT TO SHOW UP PENNILESS ...
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MONEY ...

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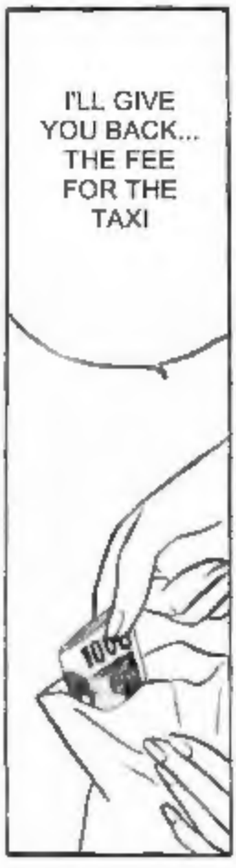
Aooo


I'LL GIVE YOU BACK... THE FEE FOR THE TAXI

SORRY, SANTA-SAN
I UNDER-STAND ...

THUS, THE SPIRIT OF THE SANTA DOLL DISAPPEARED WITHOUT FURTHER INCIDENTS

AND AFTER A FEW DAYS...

IS THIS AN ANTI-THEFT PAINTBALL OR SOME-THING LIKE THAT?
DID YOU DO IT AGAIN?
FOR SOME REASON, GRANNY WON'T SPEAK TO ME
AH~ I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT I DID YESTERDAY~

——境界のRINNE22・完——